

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 16231 080802Z
ACTION EA-12

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: BEXP, JA
SUBJECT: APPA DRAWS PROMINENT COVERAGE IN JAPANESE PRESS

1. SUMMARY. LEADING JAPANESE NEWSPAPER CARRIED RECENT FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE ON FORTHCOMING INAUGURATION OF APPA EMPHASIZING THAT PROJECT COULD GIVE SIGNIFICANT BOOST TO U.S. CONSUMER GOODS EXPORTS TO JAPAN. END SUMMARY.

2. LEADING JAPANESE BUSINESS-ORIENTED NEWSPAPER, "NIHON KEIZAI SHIMBUN" RAN FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE ON APPA PROJECT AUGUST 22. ARTICLE INDICATED THAT APPA COULD STIMULATE "NEW DEMAND" FOR U.S. CONSUMER GOODS IN JAPAN BY DISSEMINATING AMONG SMALLER JAPANESE RETAILERS AND WHOLESALERS INFORMATION ON U.S. CONSUMER GOODS AND IMPORT PROCEDURES.

3. ARTICLE STATED THAT APPA WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN OCTOBER AS PART OF INSTITUTE OF DISTRIBUTION RESEARCH (IDR), BUT WILL BE SET UP AS INDEPENDENT NON-PROFIT CORPORATION IN NEAR FUTURE. NEWSPAPER DESCRIBED APPA PREPARATORY COMMITTEE, COMPOSED OF LEADING JAPANESE RETAIL ORGANIZATIONS, AS CONFIDENT OF SUCCESS OF VENTURE. IT ALSO NOTED THAT U.S. EMBASSY AND USDOC WERE GIVING FULL SUPPORT TO APPA PROJECT AS MEANS OF INCREASING U.S. EXPORTS TO JAPAN AND REDUCING U.S.-JAPAN
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TRADE IMBALANCE.

4. ARTICLE INDICATED THAT APPA PLANNED TO COLLECT WITH EMBASSY AND DOC ASSISTANCE 50,000 (SIC) CATALOGS COVERING 100,000 ITEMS FROM U.S. MAKERS OF SUCH PRODUCTS AS HOUSEHOLD GOODS, METALWARE, SUNDRIES, APPAREL AND PROCESSED FOODS. IN ADDITION TO DISSEMINATING INFORMATION

IN THESE CATALOGS AMONG JAPANESE RETAILERS AND WHOLESALEERS, APPA WAS REPORTED TO BE PLANNING SERIES OF MARKET SURVEYS AND SEMINARS ON IMPORT PROCEDURES AT U.S. EMBASSY.

5. ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, DECISION TO ORGANIZE APPA WAS RESULT OF CONCLUSION BY IDR AND U.S. OFFICIALS THAT MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO INCREASED U.S. CONSUMER GOODS EXPORTS TO JAPAN IS DOMINATION OF DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS BY FEW LARGE TRADING COMPANIES WHICH WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOW VOLUME AND HIGH PRICE OF U.S. GOODS IN JAPAN. PAPER SAID APPA DESIGNED TO OVERCOME THIS IMPEDIMENT BY ENCOURAGING JAPANESE WHOLESALEERS AND RETAILERS TO IMPORT GOODS DIRECTLY FROM U.S.

6. COMMENT: MAIN POINTS OF ARTICLE AS SUMMARIZED ABOVE APPEAR ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE. (REFERENCE TO 50,000 CATALOGS WAS OBVIOUS MISPRINT, WITH IDEOGRAPH FOR 10,000 BEING USED INSTEAD OF IDEOGRAPH FOR 100.) THE FACT THAT APPA GOT PROMINENT AND FAVORABLE COVERAGE IN FIRST-RANK NATIONAL NEWSPAPER IS IMPORTANT. WE FEEL THAT THIS COVERAGE WILL SUBSTANTIALLY AID APPA'S EFFORTS TO RECRUIT JAPANESE FIRMS AS APPA MEMBERS. IDR, WHICH IS COORDINATING THESE EFFORTS, INFORMED US THAT ARTICLE HAS ELICITED LARGE NUMBER OF TELEPHONE AND MAIL INQUIRIES FROM INTERESTED FIRMS SINCE ITS PUBLICATION. END COMMENT.
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